9

RUTH HELYER

DeLillo and masculinity

Don DeLillo's fiction suggests that masculinity, rather than being inherent, is an insecure construction based on dominant societal norms and presented via mediated images. His writing offers a number of hypermasculine characters torn between upsetting and upholding the status quo; they display the inadequacy of stereotypes while suggesting that the concept of individuality is flawed and unsustainable. Literature can potentially aid the embedding of social conditioning; however, it can also provide a critical purchase from which to scrutinize social norms. While it is difficult to identify ideal alternatives in any cultural text, literature at least offers a forum for thinking about difference and boundary breaching. This is what DeLillo's writing does in its treatment of masculinity. Rather than replace one defunct cultural narrative with an equally invalid alternative, it displays the insecurity of masculinity without offering a facile replacement. What the reader instead becomes aware of is an emergent male self-consciousness, which is crucially and increasingly knowing about the performative nature of men's roles. For example, when Jack Gladney, the satirical protagonist of *White Noise* (1985), muses to himself about what his father-in-law might think of him, he reveals his own feelings of inadequacy, which may or may not reflect what Vernon thinks.

In a bizarre double-bluff, Jack presumes that others judge his level of masculinity according to his lack of manual skills, while at the same time acknowledging that his awareness of this ranking scenario effectively negates it. This is underpinned by a further level of awareness that Vernon may not give a second thought to Jack's skills or lack of them. Acknowledging the centrality of self-awareness to his argument reiterates the potentially ironic nature of Jack's critical comments about himself: "What could be more useless than a man who couldn't fix a dripping faucet – fundamentally useless, dead to history, to the messages in his genes?" (*WN* 245). The reader colludes with Jack in the knowledge that the manual skills he is referring to are not inherent in the male members of the race; they are acquired according to necessity and have historically become associated with being a "real" man.

Masculine identity via occupation

Jack struggles to perform an authentic masculine identity. His awareness of the ongoing battle between his conventional principles and chaotic setting prompts him to insist that "people need to be reassured by someone in a position of authority that a certain way to do something is the right way or the wrong way" (*WN* 171–2). The general feelings of chaos which unnerve Jack, tied to the surface nature of everyday life, are compounded by the more specific chaos climaxing around the toxic spill in his home town. His feelings of inadequacy are multiplied by his fear of death, his only recourse the strong masculine identity he has deliberately connected to ideas of academic self-aggrandizement. Within the associations of masculinity with occupation there is a distinctive hierarchy. His performance as masculine academic aims to elevate and protect: "I'm not just a college professor. I'm the head of a department. I don't see myself fleeing an airborne toxic event. That's for people who live in mobile homes out in the scrubby parts of the county" (*WN* 117). Jack cannot help but stereotype his fellow humans, totally caught up in the "need to structure and classify, to build a system against the terror in our souls" (*N* 81) and as a consequence he feels paranoid and unsafe when without his trademarks: "I wanted my academic gown and dark glasses" (*WN* 142). The other staff members of the School of American Environments (all men) strive to appear manly, following their leader Alfonse Stompanato, who is described as "large, sardonic, dark-staring, with scarred brows and a furious beard fringed in grey" (*WN* 65).

Despite masculine performance being closely tied to the dominant ideals of the work ethic acted out in the Western world, Stompanato's staff spend their time analyzing trivia – there are professors who do nothing but read cereal packaging. There is an uncomfortable fit between traditionally physical masculine activities and the diversity that can now be aligned with earning power and providing – the conventional strongholds of masculinity. Beyond the discussions around what constitutes sanctioned masculine modes of work, Nick Shay in *Underworld* (1997) feels that the accepted framework in which to perform them is false and restricting: "The regular hours ... the same every day. Clocking in, taking the train ... going in together, coming home together" (*U* 685). And likewise, "Nick didn't think it was necessary to have one job for life and start a family and live in a house with dinner on the table at six every night" (*U* 724). When Nick has to hone his actions to fit those of a working adult and family man, he finds it a conscious effort to adhere to schedules, and he reflects on his lack of satisfaction with so-called normal life. He is therefore glad when he finds out about his wife's affair with his work colleague Brian Glassic, feeling that

such an act has the potential to free him from some of the unwelcome responsibilities that being a breadwinner has brought him: "Relieved of my phoney role as husband and father ... feel free for just a moment, myself again ... giving it all up ... the children ... the grandchild, they could keep the two houses, all the cars, he could have both wives ... None of it ever belonged to me except in the sense that I filled out the forms" (*U* 796).

Despite any lack of genuine concern about what his wife is doing, Nick knows that to be an acceptable male he must respond to the slight on his honor by assaulting Brian. His blows are token ones as he relies on his dialogue rather than his physicality to transmit his feelings to Brian. He attempts to fulfill what is expected of him with the minimum amount of violence, therefore acknowledging that there is a blueprint for masculine behavior, while still demonstrating his consciousness of the performed nature of this behaviour. This societal requirement to behave in a "manly" way manifests itself early in Nick's life with his hoodlum existence and his refusal (or inability) to forget about his father's desertion.

Masculine identity via family

When Nick's father disappears, he and his brother Matt have to be more reliant on each other. Nick tries to care for his brother in his tough-guy way, while Matt focuses on being a cerebral chess genius. Nick tries to use his missing father as something not to imitate, always struggling with the adage "You do what they did before you" (*U* 31), but it never comes naturally to him to behave reliably, predictably, or as a provider to a family. Indeed, later in life, as quoted above, he, too, welcomes any excuse to escape from his familial responsibilities. As a teenager, he gives his younger brother an example of what not to act out – a violent murder. This act does, however, offer Matt a certain amount of street credibility in their rough neighborhood, so despite Nick's wish for Matt not to emulate him his brother gains in stature from having a sibling who is a murderer.

Mothers as well as fathers in DeLillo's work are implicated in perpetuating a certain masculinity. Eric Packer in *Cosmopolis* (2003), the product of a tough neighborhood not unlike Nick's, is also subjected to the early departure of his father. Mike Packer dies young, leaving Eric, like Nick, to be raised by his mother. Eric's narrative focuses on their frequent trips to the dark womb-like world of matinée cinema. The deep attachment Eric feels for his mother climaxes in him shooting his bodyguard for daring to whisper her name as a code to make his gun fire, a choice which reflects the passionate relationship they experienced (*C* 183–6). In *Libra* (1988) DeLillo portrays Lee Harvey Oswald as another fatherless boy, similarly close to his mother – in

fact, sleeping in the same bed until he is eleven years old. Oswald's almost claustrophobic closeness to his mother makes his confused feelings for her veer between possessive love and violent hatred. When Nick in *Underworld* has sex with Klara Sax, many years his senior, he could be said to be succumbing to this urge, to be as close as possible to a mother or motherlike figure.

Jack in *White Noise* holds onto the offspring of his various marriages, creating a hybrid family, hoping that demonstrating his ability as a socially commendable father (whether biologically theirs or not) will prevent the children from undergoing identity crises similar to his own. He takes Heinrich, his eldest son, to watch an asylum burning down, a ferocious scene that he believes cannot help but unite a father and son:

> There were other men at the scene with their adolescent boys. Evidently fathers and sons seek fellowship at such events. Fires help draw them closer, provide a conversational wedge. There is equipment to appraise, the technique of firemen to discuss and criticize. The manliness of firefighting – the virility of fires, one might say, suits the kind of laconic dialogue that fathers and sons can undertake without awkwardness or embarrassment. (*WN* 239)

In *Underworld* Nick's narrative repeatedly returns to his childhood experiences on the fringe of "The Family" – the Mafia. His own father is always a void in this dialogue, with no such uniting experiences to remember. Instead, he reiterates his theory that the Mob were at the center of his father's disappearance. Nick is excited by what he perceives as the glamor of the Mob, but afraid of the level of brutality capable of making someone totally disappear. It is the glamor and power that he tries to keep by insisting there are suspicious circumstances behind his father's disappearance, when in reality it seems unlikely that a small-time ticket-tout would be worth the Mob's time. Nick aspires to joining the high-ranking mobsters, in his mind at least, and describes their ranking system and what it is to be a "made man": "Once you're a made man, you don't need the constant living influence of sources outside yourself. You're all there. You're made. You're handmade. You're a sturdy Roman wall" (*U* 275). The phrase "made man" makes it clear how created, acted out, and performed this role is; promotion to sergeant is further enhanced by the term "handmade," with all its connotations of tradition and authenticity. Many years later, Nick acts as a mobster to entertain his staff. Threatening them in the idiom of an Italian gangster, he relies on the standardized image to pretend to be what he actually aspired to be when young. Nick's performance acts out the performance he teetered so close to as a fledgling hoodlum and his staff perpetuate this by in turn mimicking him mimicking himself. The mimicry creates some distance

among his varying selves in which to analyze the confusion of fantasizing about and adopting differing personas.

Masculine identity via sport and physical exercise

Nick attempts to affect a similar distance between himself and his killing of George, a local waiter whose drug-taking and unconventional life he finds fascinating. He always describes the shooting in the third person, as a performance to be observed (*U* 781). He tries to be equally detached from his passion for sport, taking his radio to a deserted rooftop to listen to the historic baseball game of 1951 between the Giants and the Dodgers. He therefore effectively avoids the intense emotional involvement the crowd feel with the game and the need to feel, reveal, and share such emotions as hatred, love, loyalty, and despair. These feelings are contained by the sports arena but not contained sufficiently for Nick to feel comfortable. Emotions are acted out, theatricalized, and controlled within the stadium, the narrative portraying it as a place where men can conduct sanctioned relationships with other men, such homosocial bonds forming the backbone of patriarchy. The crowd illustrates a celebration of male physical prowess free from marriage, domesticity, heterosexuality, and children. Race and class are also temporarily put aside, illustrated by the illusory friendship between a white middle-class man, Bill Waterson, and a working-class, African American adolescent, Cotter Martin, which lasts only as long as the game.

Building an admirable physique is seen to be part of this celebration. In *Underworld* Nick heaves 7-Up crates, in *White Noise* Heinrich diligently performs chin-ups in his cupboard. Yet his exercise regime, aimed at honing a manly body, cannot stop his premature hair loss. Jack berates him, "Why do you want to chin? What does chinning accomplish?" Heinrich replies, "What does anything accomplish? Maybe I just want to build up my body to compensate for other things" (*WN* 181). Heinrich claims that men are merely machines consisting of bundles of stimuli; however, this does not prevent him from straining to conform to the socially approved appearance of a man. Part of his masculine maturation is "learning how to determine his worth from the reactions of others" (*WN* 131). This necessitates treating his body as separate from his mind, accepting it as something to be trained, altered, and not allowed to reveal any weakness that would compromise his masculinity.

For cultural theorist Jean Baudrillard, the demands of extreme physical exertion are linked to controlling death. If man can control, even modify, his body, then he can control his destiny and distance himself from the chaos

around him by harnessing raw energy rather than allowing it to inflict itself on him:

> Decidedly, joggers are the true Latter Day Saints and the protagonists of an easy-does-it Apocalypse. Nothing evokes the end of the world more than a man running straight ahead on a beach, swathed in the sounds of his walkman, cocooned in the solitary sacrifice of his energy, indifferent even to catastrophes since he expects destruction to come only as the fruit of his own efforts, from exhausting the energy of a body that has in his own eyes become useless. Primitives, when in despair, would commit suicide by swimming out to sea until they could swim no longer. The jogger contemplates suicide by running up and down the beach. His eyes are wild, saliva drips from his mouth. Do not stop him. He will either hit you or simply carry on dancing around in front of you like a man possessed.[1]

Baudrillard's thoughts on running are epitomized by Jack: "It felt strange to be running. I hadn't run in many years and didn't recognize my body in this new format, didn't recognize the world beneath my feet, hard-surfaced and abrupt. I turned a corner and picked up speed, aware of floating bulk. Up, down, life, death. My robe flew behind me" (*WN* 186). While running, Jack feels the paradoxical mixing of fear and elation that Baudrillard points out, the jarring, limited earth contrasting with boundless floating air. He senses his death as intimately linked to the ground and its boundaries: "a heaviness in my legs that seemed the very pull of the earth, its most intimate and telling judgement, the law of falling bodies" (*WN* 227). Although Jack is no jogger and is running only to catch up with a colleague, his articulation of the way the physical exertion makes him feel is acutely pertinent. The mix of fear and elation, dread and enjoyment resonates with the physical extremity of sexual activity's propensity to push pleasure over the edge into oblivion and therefore the perceived need to control, contain, and define.

Masculine identity via sexuality

DeLillo's male characters' sexual performances fulfill George Bataille's assertion that "Men act in order to be."[2] In *Underworld* one of Nick's early girlfriends accepts his need to display his potency constantly with acts of random sexual performance: "She knew he'd had sex with other girls, handjobs, blowjobs, whatever else, putting it in, taking it out, putting it in, keeping it in, bareback, rubber" (*U* 704). In *Cosmopolis* Eric attempts to have sex with all his lovers on the last day of his life, resulting in encounters which are neither original nor spontaneous, but instead planned, calculated interpretations of available influences. Even his apparently accidental

encounter with his new wife, with whom he supposes he ought to be having more sex, lacks spontaneity. When it finally happens, in a dark alley on a demolition site, the fact that they have both just taken part in a mass naked scene for a film emphasizes the scripted nature of the encounter, complete with cameras and directions; they are performers: "That's what this resembled, the next scene in the black-and-white film that was being screened in theatres worldwide" (*C* 177).

Similarly, in *White Noise*, Jack fondles his wife, Babette, in the supermarket queue, the kitchen, the car, anywhere he remembers to act out the sexual facets of his masculinity. He creates and recreates himself through his desire for a created other, primarily by fulfilling stereotypes: himself constructed as Important Scholar and Babette as Dirty Blonde complete with wild hair, legwarmers, and erotic literature. Outside stimulation is required, from props and memories, to stimulate Jack's performance as an acceptable male; there is no spontaneity – instead, a script is self-inflicted in line with society's enforced norm. Part of this is trying to conform with the images deflected back from his sexual partners and being what they want him to be: "As the male partner I think it's my responsibility to please" (*WN* 28). His feelings of inadequacy are fired by his pursuit of a unity and completeness that never existed. This fantasy of sexual rapport masks the lack in both the other and the self, resulting in Jack creating a romantic narrative structure to act out around his unsatisfactory life.

Jack fears that the onrush of death will precede satisfaction, and this prompts his sexual performances. The compulsion of sex is linked to a fascination with death, born of the similar feelings that both embody: extreme release and lack of control. Jack says of sex and death that he would "hate to think they were inextricably linked" (*WN* 217), yet his irrational behavior suggests he has already acknowledged their alliance. Bataille, whose writings center on the life-shaping power of the fear of death, would see Jack's behavior as demonstrating a certain typicality, as a man "constantly in fear of himself,"[3] attempting masculine definition by being "the mirror of death."[4]

Sex and death are further linked through their shared predisposition for being unknowable. The impossibility of knowing the full intimacy of death, or indeed sex, requires that men (like George in *Underworld*) must put themselves at stake to obtain satisfaction, fulfillment, even knowledge. DeLillo describes the shooting of George as "all about risk, of course, the spirit of the dare ..." (*U* 781). Such risk-taking compromises scripted performance, the safety of any such performance instantly undermined by the vastness of what seems unknowable when pleasure is aligned with uncertainty and chance. As Heinrich wisely states, "knowledge changes every day"

(*WN* 280). Part of the mediation of accepted masculine images is that men need to keep permanently tuned in for the next installment. Rather than this safe drip-feed of the evolving outline for perfect manliness, Bataille insists that men must take risks if they want to find out more than they already know or experience more than they are already experiencing. Acting out safe identities must be forfeited: "'Communication' cannot take place from one full and intact being to another: it requires beings who have put the being within themselves *at stake*, have placed it at the limit of death, of nothingness."[5] In *Libra* Oswald demonstrates Heinrich's respect for knowledge, spending "serious time at the library" (*WN* 33); however, he realizes that risks must be taken if you are to make your mark and rise above the stereotype, even facing a death attempt to prove his seriousness about eschewing his constructed identity in order to adopt what one of his Russian interrogators calls "A second and safer identity" (166). Although described as "safe," this identity requires him to face death.

Masculine identity via death

The fear of death and the subsequent fear of sex's potential also to overwhelm are irrevocably tied to a fear of letting go of the comfort of planned and scripted constructions. These constructions are control mechanisms designed to subdue fear. Jack is attracted to the comfort of ignorance: "Does knowledge of impending death make life precious? What good is a preciousness based on fear and anxiety? It's an anxious quivering thing" (*WN* 284). He questions whether fear is another word for self-awareness and, consequently, risk-taking a pastime designed to make risk-takers feel more alive, more tangible and clearly aware of themselves. This perhaps explains his son's friend Orest Mercator choosing to sit in a cage full of deadly snakes in order to make his emotions comply with his own construction of life. Jack demonstrates recklessness himself by stealing a car and running red lights, to "escape the pull of the earth, the gravitational leaf-flutter that brings us hourly closer to dying. Simply stop obeying" (*WN* 303). Nick's statement in *Underworld* reiterates the tendency for stereotypical masculine responsibilities to tie down and stultify: "I long for the days of disarray, when I didn't give a damn or a fuck or a farthing ... the days of disorder. I want them back, the days when I was alive on the earth, rippling in the quick of my skin, heedless and real ... angry and ready all the time, a danger to others and a mystery to myself" (*U* 806–10).

Identity is a performance, intrinsically fake and with the potential to therefore be safe. In *Libra* Oswald struggles to fit in, a loner who is bullied by his peers, the system, even family members. It is undoubtedly safer to try

to blend in with the accepted clothes, hair, and accent. Win Everett in *Underworld* tellingly calls this fitting in "Spying on ourselves" (*U* 18), reiterating the self-awareness and self-policing behind constructing identities with a view to being accepted. Recklessness is associated with reality, if such an elusive notion is attainable. Jack is aware of the build-up of anger within him and, while he does not question its authenticity, he does sense an impending implosion. His way of projecting the free play of this surplus energy, of what Bataille terms "an unbroken animal that cannot be trained,"[6] into an outward explosion is by shooting Willie Mink in a radical release of energy that confronts destructive potential, while at the same time adhering to what is expected of a man whose wife is an adulteress. In *The Accursed Share* (1988), Bataille discusses such energy as being "always in excess."[7] This excess circulates, waiting to be squandered or recycled:

> Life suffocates within limits that are too close; it aspires in manifold ways to an impossible growth; it releases a steady flow of excess resources, possibly involving large squanderings of energy. The limit of growth being reached, life, without being in a closed container, at least enters into ebullition: Without exploding, its extreme exuberance pours out in a movement always bordering on explosion.[8]

Recycling is an option that DeLillo's male characters frequently turn to. Benno, in *Cosmopolis*, builds his surroundings from recycled objects; Nick, in *Underworld*, creates his professional persona from recycling waste products. Jack, in *White Noise*, claims material goods to be intolerable burdens yet is powerless to resist buying goods to replace what he throws away. The recycling is not limited to material goods, but extends to styles, events, and beliefs in the form of parody, pastiche, and déjà vu, even a recycling of desire. Jacques Lacan connects this recycling to the manner in which humans learn how to read images as part of a developing sense of the various constructed versions of "Me" and "I." These images of self become thoroughly assimilated into life as empty reflections that can be appropriated. This means that they are used in the formation and reduplication of relationships between humans, both with others and with the objects around them, part of the creation of varying forms of reality.[9] The inherent falseness and reconstituted nature of images ensure that they negate any aspirations of authenticity. This lack of authenticity cancels any claim for feeling genuine desire, simultaneously ensuring that men are uncomfortably aware of the restricted dimensions of that which deserves to be the *object* of this contrived desire. That which is worthy of desire is as much a mediated image as is the ideal male. It is difficult to cast DeLillo's men in this role given their leanings toward inadequacy, sexual promiscuity, acquisitiveness, selfishness, incest, coldness in relationships, violence, vandalism, and even murder.

Masculine identity via violence

DeLillo's fiction abounds with violent acts, the priority being "which body crushes the other" (*U* 797). This swaggering masculinity results in seventeen-year-old Nick taking machismo to its limits by fatally shooting an acquaintance. Many of the violent acts are performed by men against themselves. For example, Eric in *Cosmopolis* demands that one of his bodyguards shoots him with a stun gun, he shoots another of the bodyguards himself, and then shoots himself in the hand, before being shot and killed; also in the narrative a man burns himself to death; Jack, in *White Noise*, shoots Mink and facilitates his own wounding by giving Mink the gun, going directly against the advice his colleague Murray Siskind has proffered that killing Mink will preserve his own life; in *Underworld* George provides the gun for Nick to shoot him with; Oswald in *Libra* almost willfully allows himself to be set-up and sacrificed as a fall guy, instantaneously shooter and shot at and Rey Hartke, in *The Body Artist* (2001), shoots himself. These acts echo Bataille's proclamation, "I imagine myself covered with blood, broken but transfigured and in agreement with the world, both as prey and as jaw of TIME, which ceaselessly kills as it is ceaselessly killed."[10] There is an acceptance of the circularity of violence, pain and self-conscious identity formation. The violent act becomes part of the performance, planned and rehearsed in the mind's eye, but the pain inflicted pushes the experience of that performance into the realms of the unrehearsed (hence the need, illustrated in *White Noise* by SIMUVAC, to use the actual in order to rehearse for the imagined). The ability of pain to hurt and shock gives it a destabilizing power and the potential to cause something like genuine spontaneity:

> The world collapsed inward, all those vivid textures and connections buried in mounds of ordinary stuff. I was disappointed. Hurt, stunned and disappointed. What had happened to the higher plane of energy in which I'd carried out my scheme? The pain was searing. Blood covered my forearm, wrist and hand. I staggered back, moaning, watching blood drip from the tips of my fingers. I was troubled and confused. (*WN* 313)

Jack feels let down. He has carried out society's expectation by avenging his wife's infidelity, so why is he left feeling nothing but pain, fear, and confusion? Obeying social pressures to conform to stereotypical identities is never satisfactory; no performance can ever be good enough as the image of what is normal and what is perfect changes and evolves. DeLillo's men gravitate toward the force and violence traditionally expected of them, but it is an unpleasant surprise to find that this violence does not solve anything or give the real world any more clarity. Violence against the self has to

escalate into death and self-annihilation before anything new and unmediated is revealed. Jack's search for an intense connection with physicality, "the visceral jolt" (*WN* 308), becomes too real when Mink returns his fire, agonizingly shattering his wrist. The intensity of the pain and luminous red blood forces the would-be murderer to divert from his carefully scripted and contained actions. Indeed, Jack saves Mink by taking him to hospital, the exact opposite of his plan.

In *Cosmopolis* the fatal attack on Nikolai Kaganovich and the stabbing of Arthur Rapp, live on the television money channel, are events that are televised and watched repeatedly. However, they take the viewer no closer to experiencing death. Only those providing the spectacle go beyond the violent end. Masculinity is mediated and copied, with television serving as the most prolific purveyor of images: "The flow is constant ... For most people there are only two places in the world. Where they live and their TV set" (*WN* 66). But there has to be a fall guy. It is not merely about acting, and those who are viewed as behaving in a validly brave and physical manner, even to the point of death, have to actually die. There is nothing fake or inauthentic about this: even when the death is part of a filmed and mediated performance, it is still death.

Ironically, while technology has the potential to save humans and enhance life, what it seems more commonly to do is frighten and alienate us from our own (frail) bodies. The television is used to uphold desirable masculinity, making actual men feel inadequate. Jack illustrates this in *White Noise*, his technological health check distancing him from his own dying (*WN* 141). Similarly, in *Cosmopolis* the spycams in Eric's car reveal events to him before they happen: "Eric watched himself on the oval screen below the spycam, running his thumb along his chinline ... he realized queerly that he'd just placed his thumb on his chinline, a second or two after he'd seen it on-screen" (*C* 22). This alteration of accepted chronology serves to distance Eric from his image, his identity, and his life. Mediated images are never straightforward. Furthermore, they are filtered through preconceived notions, as Victor Seidler terms it: "We can be so used to constructing our experience according to how we think that things ought to be, that it can be difficult to acknowledge any emotions and feelings that go against these images."[11] *Cosmopolis* suggests a world turned full-circle where the sophisticated technology of voice-activated guns, mobile offices, and constant surveillance, rather than enhancing life, mitigates against its full and satisfying development. Masculine identity is part of this struggle; DeLillo's men perfectly encapsulate the conflicting pressures of society and soul. The "messages in his genes" that Jack refers to in *White Noise* are as dead and contested as the "history" he credits them with, yet men still strive to behave in the way they feel they

ought to in order to fulfill their traditional roles, tellingly illustrated by Jack's wistful fantasizing about manual skills and less humorously by Oswald's willingness to kill and be killed.

Notes

1. Jean Baudrillard, *America* (London: Verso, 1999), p. 38.
2. Georges Bataille, *Eroticism*, trans. Mary Dalwood (London: Boyars, 1987), p. 171.
3. Ibid., p. 7.
4. Georges Bataille, *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings 1927–1939*, ed. Allan Stoekl, trans. Allan Stoekl, C.R. Lovitt and D.M. Leslie, Jr. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 239.
5. Georges Bataille writing about Nietzsche, quoted by Jacques Derrida in *Writing and Difference* (London: Routledge, 1978), p. 263.
6. Georges Bataille, *The Accursed Share*, trans. Robert Hurley (London: Zone Books, 1988), p. 24.
7. Ibid., p. 23.
8. Ibid., p. 30.
9. Jacques Lacan, *Ecrits: A Selection*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1977), pp. 1–8.
10. Bataille, *Visions*, p. 239.
11. Victor J. Seidler, *Unreasonable Men: Masculinity and Social Theory* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 138.